IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as set forth below.

1. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

a bus; and

a plurality of agents coupled to said bus, each of the plurality of agents configured to arbitrate for said bus, and wherein a predetermined first agent of said plurality of agents is a default winner of an arbitration if none of said plurality of agents arbitrates for said bus during said arbitration, wherein said first agent is an ~~equal~~ arbitration participant with other ones of said plurality of agents in an arbitration scheme implemented by the system, and wherein said arbitration scheme includes an arbitration priority of said plurality of agents, and wherein said first agent is changed from a current priority in said arbitration priority to a lowest priority in said arbitration priority in response to using said bus as said default winner.

2. (Original) The system as recited in claim 1 wherein said first agent is said default winner independent of which of said plurality of agents was last to use said bus.

3. (Original) The system as recited in claim 1 further comprising a plurality of request signals, each of said plurality of request signals corresponding to a respective agent of said plurality of agents and used by said respective agent to indicate whether or not said respective agent is arbitrating for said bus, and wherein said first agent is coupled to receive at least one of said plurality of request signals corresponding to other ones of said plurality of agents, and wherein said first agent is configured to determine if none of said plurality of agents is arbitrating responsive to said plurality of request signals.

4. (Original) The system as recited in claim 1 wherein said bus is a split transaction bus including an address bus and a data bus, and wherein said first agent is said default

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winner of said data bus responsive to none of said plurality of agents arbitrating for said data bus.

5. (Original) The system as recited in claim 1 wherein said first agent is configured to use said bus responsive to being said default winner only if said first agent has information to transfer on said bus.

6. (Original) The system as recited in claim 1 wherein said first agent is configured to arbitrate for said bus if at least one other of said plurality of agents is arbitrating for said bus during said arbitration and said first agent has information to transfer on said bus.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) The system as recited in claim 1 further comprising one or more arbiters configured to perform said arbitration, wherein said one or more arbiters are configured to maintain a state indicative of [an] said arbitration priority of said plurality of agents, and wherein an agent winning an arbitration is changed to lowest priority in said arbitration priority.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) An arbiter for a bus comprising:

        a first circuit coupled to receive a plurality of request signals, each of said
                plurality of request signals corresponding to a respective agent of a
                plurality of agents coupled to said bus and indicative of whether or not
                said respective agent is arbitrating for said bus, wherein said first circuit is
                configured to grant use of said bus to a first agent if none of said plurality
                of agents is arbitrating for said bus, said first agent predetermined to be
                granted use of said bus if none of said plurality of agents is arbitrating for
                said bus, wherein said first agent is an equal arbitration participant with

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other ones of said plurality of agents in an arbitration scheme implemented by said plurality of agents, and wherein said arbitration scheme includes an arbitration priority of said plurality of agents, and wherein said first agent is changed from a current priority in said arbitration priority to a lowest priority in said arbitration priority in response to using said bus granted in response to none of said plurality of agents arbitrating for said bus.

11. (Original) The arbiter as recited in claim 10 wherein said first circuit is configured to grant use of said bus to said first agent independent of which of said plurality of agents was last to use said bus.

12. (Original) The arbiter as recited in claim 10 wherein said bus is a split transaction bus including an address bus and a data bus, and wherein said first agent is granted use of said data bus responsive to none of said plurality of agents arbitrating for said data bus.

13. (Previously Amended) The arbiter as recited in claim 10 further comprising a second circuit configured to determine if said first agent wins an arbitration for said bus if at least one of said plurality of agents is arbitrating for said bus, and wherein said second circuit is configured to determine if said first agent wins said arbitration according to said arbitration scheme.

14. (Original) The arbiter as recited in claim 10 further comprising a storage coupled to said second circuit, said storage storing an indication of the relative priority of said other ones of said plurality of agents to said first agent, and wherein a winner of said arbitration is updated to lowest priority.

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

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granting use of a bus to a first agent of a plurality of agents responsive to none of
said plurality of agents arbitrating for said bus, said first agent
predetermined to be granted use of said bus if none of said plurality of
agents is arbitrating for said bus, wherein said first agent is an ~~equal~~
arbitration participant with other ones of said plurality of agents in an
arbitration scheme implemented by said plurality of agents;

said first agent using said bus in response to said granting; and

changing an arbitration priority of said arbitration scheme in response to said first
agent using said bus, said first agent changed from a current priority to a
lowest priority in said arbitration priority.

17. (Original) The method as recited in claim 16 wherein said granting is independent of
which of said plurality of agents was last to use said bus.

18. (Original) The method as recited in claim 16 further comprising:

receiving a plurality of request signals, each of said plurality of request signals
corresponding to a respective agent of said plurality of agents and
indicative of whether or not said respective agent is arbitrating for said
bus; and

determining that none of said plurality of agents is arbitrating responsive to said
plurality of request signals.

19. (Original) The method as recited in claim 16 wherein said bus is a split transaction
bus including an address bus and a data bus, and wherein said granting comprises
granting use of said data bus to said first agent.

20. (Original) The method as recited in claim 16 further comprising using said bus by

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said first agent in response to said granting only if said first agent has information to transfer on said bus.

21. (Original) The method as recited in claim 20 further comprising arbitrating for said bus by said first agent if one or more other ones of said plurality of agents are arbitrating.

22. (Previously Amended) The method as recited in claim 21 further comprising determining a winner of an arbitration according to said arbitration scheme.

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Currently Amended) A carrier medium comprising a database which is operated upon by a program executable on a computer system, the program operating on the database to perform a portion of a process to fabricate an integrated circuit including circuitry described by the database, the circuitry described in the database including a system comprising:

a bus; and

a plurality of agents coupled to said bus, each of the plurality of agents configured to arbitrate for said bus, and wherein a predetermined first agent of said plurality of agents is a default winner of an arbitration if none of said plurality of agents arbitrates for said bus during said arbitration, wherein said first agent is an ~~equal~~ arbitration participant with other ones of said plurality of agents in an arbitration scheme implemented by the system, and wherein said arbitration scheme includes an arbitration priority of said plurality of agents, and wherein said first agent is changed from a current priority in said arbitration priority to a lowest priority in said arbitration priority in response to using said bus as said default winner.

25. (Previously Added) The carrier medium as recited in claim 24 wherein said first

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agent is said default winner independent of which of said plurality of agents was last to use said bus.

26. (Previously Added) The carrier medium as recited in claim 24 wherein said bus is a split transaction bus including an address bus and a data bus, and wherein said first agent is said default winner of said data bus responsive to none of said plurality of agents arbitrating for said data bus.

27. (Previously Added) The carrier medium as recited in claim 24 wherein said first agent is configured to use said bus responsive to being said default winner only if said first agent has information to transfer on said bus.

28. (Currently Amended) The carrier medium as recited in claim 24 further comprising one or more arbiters configured to perform said arbitration, wherein said one or more arbiters are configured to maintain a state indicative of [an] said arbitration priority of said plurality of agents, and wherein an agent winning an arbitration is changed to lowest priority in said arbitration priority.

29. (Cancelled)

30. (Currently Amended) A carrier medium comprising a database which is operated upon by a program executable on a computer system, the program operating on the database to perform a portion of a process to fabricate an integrated circuit including circuitry described by the database, the circuitry described in the database including an arbiter for a bus, the arbiter comprising:

> a first circuit coupled to receive a plurality of request signals, each of said
> > plurality of request signals corresponding to a respective agent of a
> > plurality of agents coupled to said bus and indicative of whether or not
> > said respective agent is arbitrating for said bus, wherein said first circuit is
> > configured to grant use of said bus to a first agent if none of said plurality

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of agents is arbitrating for said bus, said first agent predetermined to be granted use of said bus if none of said plurality of agents is arbitrating for said bus, wherein said first agent is an ~~equal~~ arbitration participant with other ones of said plurality of agents in an arbitration scheme implemented by said plurality of agents, <u>and wherein said arbitration scheme includes an arbitration priority of said plurality of agents, and wherein said first agent is changed from a current priority in said arbitration priority to a lowest priority in said arbitration priority in response to using said bus granted in response to none of said plurality of agents arbitrating for said bus.</u>

31. (Previously Added) The carrier medium as recited in claim 30 wherein said first circuit is configured to grant use of said bus to said first agent independent of which of said plurality of agents was last to use said bus.

32. (Previously Added) The carrier medium as recited in claim 30 wherein said bus is a split transaction bus including an address bus and a data bus, and wherein said first agent is granted use of said data bus responsive to none of said plurality of agents arbitrating for said data bus.

33. (Previously Added) The carrier medium as recited in claim 30 further comprising a storage configured to store an indication of the relative priority of said other ones of said plurality of agents to said first agent, and wherein a winner of said arbitration is updated to lowest priority.

34. (Cancelled)

35. (New) The system as recited in claim 1 wherein said first agent is configured to drive said bus responsive to being said default winner even if said first agent has no information to transfer on said bus.

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36. (New) The system as recited in claim 1 wherein said arbitration priority is changed in response to any one of the plurality of agents using said bus.

37. (New) The system as recited in claim 36 wherein said one of said plurality of agents using said bus is changed to said lowest priority.

38. (New) The arbiter as recited in claim 10 wherein said arbitration priority is changed in response to any one of the plurality of agents using said bus.

39. (New) The arbiter as recited in claim 38 wherein said one of said plurality of agents using said bus is changed to said lowest priority.

40. (New) The method as recited in claim 16 further comprising driving said bus by said first agent in response to said granting even if said first agent has no information to transfer on said bus.

41. (New) The carrier medium as recited in claim 24 wherein said first agent is configured to drive said bus responsive to being said default winner even if said first agent has no information to transfer on said bus.

42. (New) The carrier medium as recited in claim 24 wherein said arbitration priority is changed in response to any one of the plurality of agents using said bus.

43. (New) The carrier medium as recited in claim 42 wherein said one of said plurality of agents using said bus is changed to said lowest priority.

44. (New) The carrier medium as recited in claim 30 wherein said arbitration priority is changed in response to any one of the plurality of agents using said bus.

45. (New) The carrier medium as recited in claim 44 wherein said one of said plurality of agents using said bus is changed to said lowest priority.

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